you giving it to outsiders? Why are you not encouraging you own talented people?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I am grateful to the hon. Member for having made this suggestion. Encouragement of in-house programming is one of the important items on the agenda of Prasar Bharti, which has been taken up. As far as news and current affairs programmes are concerned, approximately, besides news itself, l/3rd of the programmes are now being made in-house. In fact, the Expert Committee, which we appointed, also suggested encouraging in-house programming. The rates for some of the programmes, which had earlier been given only to outside producers, have been reduced. Besides, in some of the cases, we have taken the same anchors, but made in-house production so that we are required to make payment only to the anchor and not to the company from which the programme has been taken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Proposal for opening of special employment exchange for handicapped

*4. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Bihar has sent proposal to the Central Government regarding opening of special employment exchange or special cells in some of the general employment exchanges for handicapped under Centrally Sponsored scheme;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the proposal; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MENAKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir: A proposal was sent by the Government of Bihar, vide their letter dated 28.10.1999 for setting up 11 Special Cells within the Normal Employment Exchanges at a total cost of Rs. 37,88,400/-.

(b) and (c) A reply was sent to the Government of Bihar on 31.01.2000 stating that their proposal for setting up Special Cells could not be considered

in view of the Government of India's decision conveyed to all the State Governments/UT Administrations on 17.05.1994 that no new Special Cells are to be set up. They were also advised that they would have to meet 20% of the expenses in case they propose to set up Special Employment Exchanges. In their reply dated 15.03.2000, the State Government stated that they have a proposal to set up Special Employment Exchanges at Ranch! and Dumka at a cost of Rs. 6.56 lakhs and that they would meet their share of 20%. They further stated that a proposal would be sent after approval by the State Government No such proposal has been received so far. The State Government has been reminded on 11.04.2000 and 19.07.2000.

Review of Status of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

*5. SHRI N.R. DASARI:

SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new Committee has been constituted comprising representatives from the Centre and the State to review the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant's status;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have been holding talks with Tatas and Ispat Group of the Mittals for privatisation of this plant; and

(d) if so, the details of the discussions held and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORETRIPATHY): (a) and (c)No, Sir.

(b) and (d) Do not arise.

Safety and security of Gas pipline passing through Pakistan

*6. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India proposed to buy Iranian Gas through pipeline passing through Pak territory;

(b) if so, the details of guarantee offered for safety and security of the gas pipeline; and